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The following message was dispatched to the quarantine officer at Havana: Buenos Aires, Spanish trans-Atlantic Line has had deaths from smallpox during the voyage.

Respectfully,

A. H. GLENNAN,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

Effort to obtain a disinfecting barge at San Juan.

SAN JUAN, PORTO RICO, November 21, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to state that owing to the uneasiness upon this island in regard to the plague and the commercial relations of this island with the ports of Spain, I invited the principal steamship agents to this office for conference.

The fact was elicited that in case of danger, vessels from infected or suspected ports would have to first proceed to a port where suitable disinfection could be carried out, or else total nonintercourse established with Porto Rico.

They immediately proposed to start a subscription among the merchants to purchase a disinfection barge, but I suggested that they address a petition to the governor-general to supply a well equipped modern floating disinfection plant.

A strong paper was signed by 50 of the principal business men and steamship lines. The governor referred the petition to the superior board of health, and as chairman of the committee on internal quarantine, I made the following indorsement:

"Respectfully returned to the superior board of health with the report that Port Rico possesses no apparatus for the disinfection of infected vessels, and the danger and interference to commerce is not overstated. The Department at Washington will cause a suitable floating plant to be fitted up in the States, when an allotment is made to pay for the same from the insular funds of the island, and no doubt the barge would be towed to Porto Rico by a vessel of the Revenue-Cutter Service, thereby saving expense of transfer."

The petition was returned to General Davis with a favorable recommendation by the superior board of health. I also cited the good work performed by the barge *Protector* in Havana harbor, and advocated a similar barge and not a makeshift.

Respectfully,

A. H. GLENNAN,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S., In Command.

REPORTS FROM THE MEXICAN BORDER.

Eagle Pass, Tex., November 28, 1899.—I have the honor to report that the rigid quarantine at Presidio, Tex., is still maintained, as smallpox continues to exist in epidemic form on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande across from that place.

Collector Drake desires me to proceed to Presidio as early as possible and report accurately on the situation, as the people of the Presidio country seem to think that such a rigid quarantine as is now in progress is not necessary. I shall endeavor, when I get to Presidio, to allow entry of people to the American side after detention and disinfection of themselves and their baggage, provided that this plan is feasible after thoroughly investigating the conditions, etc.

At Eagle Pass I am still inspecting the trains and am allowing no persons entry from Orizaba or Vera Cruz unless the best evidences of good health can be given. Numerous reports come to me of the existence of smallpox all along the line of the Mexican International Railroad (the connecting road with the Southern Pacific system at this place). That these reports are based on facts I have no doubt, though it is absolutely impossible to get a person coming from that section to state that he or she has been exposed to smallpox.

I have had 2 persons to come through here from Monclova, Mexico, destined for Texas points not far distant from Eagle Pass. Both of these people swore that they had not been exposed to smallpox, etc.; in fact, swore to anything. Several days after their arrival in Texas they became ill, when physicians were called and the ailments turned out to be genuine cases of variola. Both persons died, not however, before they had infected a number of other individuals. As a result of the false statements of these persons some 7 deaths occurred from smallpox contracted by other parties from aforesaid individuals.

At Hondo and the San Felipe mines (both Mexican settlements not far from this port) smallpox is reported in epidemic form at the present time. It is my belief that these places should be investigated; in fact, every town and settlement on the Mexico International Railroad should be inspected, in order that I might be able to keep disease out of this place.

The guards here have orders to turn back all persons from suspected localities who can not prove definitely that they have not been exposed to disease.

The detention camp is still being kept up, though for the past four weeks no persons have been detained, all being returned to Mexico.

Every ford along the river is continually watched, and entrance to this country without the knowledge of the sanitary guards and myself is a matter of some difficulty.

The health status of Eagle Pass is good, though 1 case of scarlet fever was reported to me by the State health officer at this place. The Department was informed of this case by Dr. Duggan, State health officer.

Respectfully,

LEA HUME,
Acting Assistant Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.

El Paso, Tex., November 25, 1899.—I have the honor to submit the following general work for the week ended November 25, 1899: inspection Mexican Central Railway passengers, 139; inspection of immigrants, 22; returned to Mexico, family with 2 children, father having refused to have the children vaccinated, 2; inspection, international bridge, and gave certificate of successful vaccination, 30; vaccinated children of immigrants and other destitutes, 17; disinfected baggage of immigrants, 7; disinfected soiled linen of Mexican Central Pullman, laundered here, 600 pieces.

Respectfully,

E. ALEXANDER,
Sanitary Inspector, U. S. M. H. S.